



California Postsecondary Education Commission

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Commission Recommends Approaches for Improving Community Colleges Student Success

SACRAMENTO — March 15, 2007 — The California Postsecondary Education Commission will present a new report in its series on California higher education accountability at its March 20-21, 2007 meeting. The report, *California Community College Students' Degrees and Certificates Awarded and Successful Transfers*, examined the number of students who earned two-year degrees or certificates, or who transferred to a four-year public university.

The results of the study showed that from 2001-2005:

- Only 17% of students earned a two-year degree or certificate;
- 22% transferred to one of California's public universities;
- About half left the community college system without earning a degree or transferring to a public California university;
- 19% were still enrolled at a community college;
- Women attained degrees/certificates and transfers at higher rates than men; and
- A small proportion of Latinos and African-Americans, particularly males, earned degrees/certificates or transferred to California's public universities.

"The success of our community college students has a positive impact on California's workforce," said Murray J. Haberman, the Commission's Executive Director, "so we need to develop mechanisms to graduate and transfer more of these students from our college systems."

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To do so, the Commission is recommending that policymakers support initiatives that will increase the number of community college students earning degrees or certificates, and for improving their rate of transfer. Recommendations include:

- Student services should be improved to assist students in better defining and pursuing their educational goals;
- Counseling and mentoring services should be targeted to populations showing the poorest educational outcomes; and
- Community college “guarantee” programs should be established that provide a clear path for students desiring to transfer to a four-year program.

The Commission’s report also discusses both the economic and public policy needs for a more highly-educated citizenry. “We must close the gap between students who are succeeding and those who aren’t,” said Olivia K. Singh, the Commission’s Chair. “We need successful students to contribute to California’s thriving economy and to maintain our high quality of life.”

The full report can be viewed at http://www.cpec.ca.gov/Agendas/Agenda0703/Item_15.pdf.

The Commission streams its meetings via the Internet at <http://www.cpec.ca.gov>.

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The California Postsecondary Education Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. The Commission’s primary focus is to ensure that the state’s educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities.